

County Hears Provo Canyon Recreation Proposals

By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN

Plans for recreation facilities in Provo Canyon were presented to the Utah County commission for their consideration Wednesday afternoon by Carl Johnson, county planning director.

Mr. Johnson said the county planning department is working closely with the Wasatch County planner in developing a master plan for Provo Canyon and proposing public recreational facilities.

He reported that Clark Thorstensen of Brigham Young University had made a study of canyon recreational facilities, which pointed out that only 60 per cent of the people who use the present recreational spots in the county are from Utah and Wasatch counties.

Skiing Demand

Representatives of the proposed Four Seasons ski area estimate that Utah County could handle 274,000 skiers in 1975 if the facilities were developed, Mr. Johnson said.

While no exact figures were possible, Mr. Johnson said it has been estimated that the demand for such recreation facilities could be as high as 639,000 in

1980; 911,000 by 1985, and 1,168,000 by 1990.

Of the recreational activities possible in Provo Canyon, Mr. Johnson reported the projected demand for 1975 showed eight activities involving over 90,000 persons.

They included hiking, 103,900; pleasure driving, 120,100; stream fishing, 97,000; pond fishing, 93,000; picnicking, 142,200; camping, 118,600; wilderness refuge, 92,000, and photography, 98,400.

Projections for 1980 and 1990 show these figures considerably increased, he added.

Other Activities

Other activities included in the list were horseback riding, trail bike riding, bicycle riding, four-wheel drive vehicles, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, winter tubing, kayaking, hunting, archery and firearms range shooting.

Mr. Johnson reviewed nine recreation areas in the county which might be developed.

At Orem City Park, it has been recommended the area be developed for picnicking, biking and hiking. Mr. Johnson also suggested that an information center be located at the park.

The barrier created by the Provo River, and the scattered location of picnic units requires the development of drive-in picnic units, he said. Picnicking should include family units, group shelters, restrooms, horseshoe courts, drinking fountains, and parking.

One problem with the park is the lack of vegetation and the expense involved in developing it for public recreation, Mr. Johnson said.

Pole Canyon

At Pole Canyon on the Squaw Peak Trail, there already is an archery range, Mr. Johnson said, and he recommended additional developments of a rifle range and trap shooting area. The area also lends itself to establishment of a tubing hill, he reported.

Canyon Glen is somewhat in question because the alignment of the Provo Canyon Highway has not yet been decided, Mr. Johnson reported, but he indicated the area could be expanded for picnicking, ball fields, informal playground, amphitheater, and bike and hike paths.

Mr. Johnson emphasized it might be possible to expand Canyon Glen to include an

adjacent area now owned by Spring Dell.

Nunns Park

Nunns Park is a historical site which should be developed and preserved, possibly as a bicentennial project for 1976, the county planner said. The approximately 10 acres is owned by Utah Power and Light Co. and might be developed by the owners, by the state, by the county, or by all three working together, he added.

Mr. Johnson noted Nunns Park has areas available for picnicking, biking, hiking, and other recreations. Restoration of the old Nunns Power Building as a museum of historical worth should be pursued, he said.

The fate of Rotary Park is in question at present, since the Utah Highway Department now wants the canyon highway alignment to run directly through the park, Mr. Johnson reported. Even if this is done, there may be some small areas left on each side of the highway where picnic tables could be placed, he said.

Vivian Park

Vivian Park will soon be purchased by Utah County for development as a public

recreation area.

The planning director said the facilities which are proposed include an open field for softball, volleyball, badminton, and other outdoor sports, as well as picnicking facilities and a playground.

A fishing pond for handicapped persons is proposed, along with a train depot for the Wasatch Mountain Railroad (Heber Creeper), he said.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that some three feet of fill will be required in part of the park to raise it above the flood plain of Provo River.

Recreation leaders have recommended that playground equipment not be the same kind which can be found in city parks, but rather facilities which blend in with the canyon atmosphere, such as sandpits, slides, climbing tower, and creative play structures, Mr. Johnson indicated.

Provo City has a park up the South Fork which can be developed further to include more picnic areas, a trail head, open space for ball games, and a nature trail.

Mr. Johnson reported that Deer Creek Park below the dam

will be developed by Wasatch County, but can be expanded for picnicking, camping, and watersports.

Upper Falls

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Upper Falls park is in public ownership but is badly in need of rehabilitation. He said he felt it could be restored to good use by proper management.

The planning director asked commissioners to consider the order of priority they wished to follow in park development in the canyon, and emphasized that the Provo - Jordan River Parkway will be involved in some of the areas.

Commissioners indicated they probably would want to see Vivian Park developed first, with the rehabilitation of Upper Falls second. Others suggested by Mr. Johnson, in order, included Nunns and Canyon Glen parks.

Commissioners said they have not made provisions in the 1975 budget for a county parks department, although they would provide some funds for park acquisition and work. The establishment of a parks department probably will be delayed until 1976, they reported.